

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

2138 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6216

(202) 225-6906  
[judiciary.house.gov](http://judiciary.house.gov)

June 16, 2023

The Honorable Daniel Werfel  
Commissioner  
Internal Revenue Service  
1111 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20224

Dear Commissioner Werfel:

The Committee on the Judiciary and the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government are conducting oversight of federal agencies' commitment to protecting the civil liberties of American citizens. We have recently received allegations that an Internal Revenue Service agent provided a false name to an Ohio taxpayer as part of a deception to gain entry into the taxpayer's home to confront her about delinquent tax filings. When the taxpayer rightfully objected to the agent's tactics, the IRS agent insisted that he "can . . . go into anyone's house at any time" as an IRS agent. These allegations raise serious concerns about the IRS's commitment to fundamental civil liberties.

On March 27, 2023, the Committee previously wrote to you and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen about an IRS agent visiting—unannounced and unprompted—the home of journalist Matt Taibbi.<sup>1</sup> Incredibly, at the time of the visit, Mr. Taibbi was testifying before the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government about how the federal government pressured, coerced, and even directed technology companies to take certain actions related to digital content.<sup>2</sup> The Committee is continuing to investigate the IRS's reasons for visiting Mr. Taibbi's home and whether the visit was conducted in an attempt to intimidate a witness before Congress.<sup>3</sup>

Since then, the Committee has learned of another instance in which an IRS agent performed an unannounced field visit to a taxpayer. The details of this field visit are bizarre. On

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Rep. Jim Jordan, Chairman, H. Comm. on the Judiciary, to Janet Yellen, Sec'y, Dep't of the Treas. & Daniel Werfel, Comm'r, Internal Revenue Serv. (Mar. 27, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> HEARING ON THE WEAPONIZATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, SELECT SUBCOMM. ON THE WEAPONIZATION OF THE FED. GOV'T OF THE H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY (March 9, 2023) (testimony of Matt Taibbi).

<sup>3</sup> See Letter from Rep. Jim Jordan, Chairman, H. Comm. on the Judiciary, to Daniel Werfel, Comm'r, Internal Revenue Serv. (May 24, 2023).

April 25, 2023, an IRS agent—who identified himself as “Bill Haus” with the IRS’s Criminal Division—visited the home of a taxpayer in Marion, Ohio. Agent “Haus” informed the taxpayer he was at her home to discuss issues concerning an estate for which the taxpayer was the fiduciary. After Agent “Haus” shared details about the estate only the IRS would know, the taxpayer let him in. Agent “Haus” told the taxpayer that she did not properly complete the filings for the estate and that she owed the IRS “a substantial amount.” Prior to the visit, however, the taxpayer had not received any notice from the IRS of an outstanding balance on the estate.

During the visit, the taxpayer told Agent “Haus” that the estate was resolved in January 2023, and provided him with proof that she had paid all taxes for the decedent’s estate. At this point, Agent “Haus” revealed that the true purpose of his visit was not due to any issue with the decedent’s estate, but rather because the decedent allegedly had several delinquent tax return filings.<sup>4</sup> Agent “Haus” provided several documents to the taxpayer for her to fill out, which included sensitive information about the decedent.

The taxpayer called her attorney who immediately and repeatedly asked Agent “Haus” to leave the taxpayer’s home. Agent “Haus” responded aggressively, insisting: “I am an IRS agent, I can be at and go into anyone’s house at any time I want to be.” Before finally leaving the taxpayer’s property, Agent “Haus” said he would mail paperwork to the taxpayer, and threatened that she had one week to satisfy the remaining balance or he would freeze all her assets and put a lien on her house.

Following the visit, the taxpayer contacted the Marion, Ohio Police Department (MPD) to determine whether the visit was part of a scam. The MPD ran the license plate of the car that Agent “Haus” drove, and learned Agent “Haus” had used an alias. The officer called Agent “Haus” to verify his identity, and the agent—who identified himself as an IRS agent—admitted to using an alias. Believing Agent “Haus” was trying to scam the taxpayer, the MPD advised him not to go the taxpayer’s home again or he would be arrested. Agent “Haus” then filed a complaint against the officer with the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA).<sup>5</sup> The MPD later learned Agent “Haus” was a legitimate IRS agent after contacting TIGTA to respond to his complaint.

On May 4, 2023, the taxpayer spoke with the supervisor of Agent “Haus,” who clarified nothing was owed on the estate. The supervisor even admitted to the taxpayer that “things never should have gotten this far.” On May 5, 2023, however, the taxpayer received a letter from the IRS—the first and only written notice the taxpayer received of the decedent’s delinquent tax filings—addressed to the decedent, which stated the decedent was delinquent on several 1040 filings. On May 15, 2023, the taxpayer spoke again with supervisor of Agent “Haus,” who told the taxpayer to disregard the May 5 letter because nothing was due. On May 30, 2023, the taxpayer received a letter from the IRS that the case had been closed.

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<sup>4</sup> On May 4, 2023, Agent Haus’s supervisor confirmed with the taxpayer that the decedent only had one delinquent filing from 2016. The supervisor also confirmed the decedent’s 1041 final return was completed and that nothing was due.

<sup>5</sup> Prompted by a call from the TIGTA, the taxpayer filed a complaint against the agent on May 9, 2023.

This behavior from an IRS agent to an American taxpayer—providing an alias, using deception to secure entry into the taxpayer’s home, and then filing an Inspector General complaint against a police officer examining that matter—is highly concerning. As the Committee continues to examine how to best protect Americans’ fundamental freedoms and to assist the Committee in its oversight, we ask that you please provide the following documents and information:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to the IRS’s field visit to the residence of taxpayer [REDACTED] on April 25, 2023, located at [REDACTED], including but not limited to the IRS’s reasons for conducting the field visit and prior efforts to contact taxpayer [REDACTED];
2. All documents and communications between or among the IRS, Treasury Department, and any other Executive Branch entity referring or relating to the IRS’s field visit to [REDACTED] residence, [REDACTED] role as executor of the estate of decedent [REDACTED], [REDACTED] estate, or outstanding balances or taxes owed by decedent [REDACTED];
3. All documents and communications sent or received by Agent [REDACTED] referring or relating to the taxpayer [REDACTED], Officer [REDACTED] of MPD, Major [REDACTED] of MPD, the decedent [REDACTED], or [REDACTED] estate.

Please produce all documents and information as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 30, 2023. In addition, please treat these discovery obligations as ongoing and applicable to any information generated after receipt of this letter.

Pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on the Judiciary has jurisdiction to conduct oversight of matters concerning “civil liberties” to inform potential legislative reforms.<sup>6</sup> In addition, H. Res. 12 authorized the Committee’s Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government to investigate “issues related to the violation of the civil liberties of citizens of the United States.”<sup>7</sup>

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan  
Chairman

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<sup>6</sup> Rules of the House of Representatives R. X (2023).

<sup>7</sup> H. Res. 12 § 1(b)(1).

The Honorable Daniel Werfel

June 16, 2023

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cc: The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Ranking Member  
The Honorable J. Russell George, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration